



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Research Explorer

Real women

Citation for published version:

Mackay, R 2017, 'Real women: Objectivity versus situatedness in Critical Discourse Studies', *Critical Discourse Studies*, pp. 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2017.1320297>

Digital Object Identifier (DOI):

[10.1080/17405904.2017.1320297](https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2017.1320297)

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Peer reviewed version

Published In:

Critical Discourse Studies

Publisher Rights Statement:

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in Critical Discourse Studies on 25/4/2017, available online: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17405904.2017.1320297>

General rights

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

The University of Edinburgh has made every reasonable effort to ensure that Edinburgh Research Explorer content complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact openaccess@ed.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



Real Women: Objectivity versus Situatedness in Critical Discourse Studies

Rowan R. Mackay, University of Edinburgh, 29 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9JS,
email: rowanmackay@ed.ac.uk

Abstract: This paper discusses the role of objectivity and interpretation within Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), arguing that the recognized and accepted situatedness of scholars has implications that are underplayed – to detrimental effect. Following Latour, and admitting the essential role of interpretation in all science, this paper encourages those working within CDS to engage more explicitly with their own roles as interpreters. Arguing for the importance and benefits of such a shift, the case is made for a re-appreciation of the role of interpretation in the rigorous and systematic analysis of texts. Drawing upon insights from translation, deconstruction, and hermeneutics, and analyzing a recent interview by the feminist, Germaine Greer, and the angry reactions it provoked from within the Trans community, I argue that CDS scholars should embrace the implications that undertaking a socio-political committed analysis brings with it.

Introduction

Within critical discourse studies linguists have, to some extent, engaged with the thorny topic of analyst bias, often in a caveated disclosure of interest and motivation. ‘We are all situated’ is a mantra to both humble and embolden: omniscience is not within grasp – for anyone. And yet there remains a disinclination to embrace what this acknowledgement of situatedness entails: we are interpreters, and what we, as academics, produce, are works of interpretation. Our interpretation can be the result of a systematic, rigorous, transparent, and repeatable process, but interpretation it is, and *our* interpretation at that. Another person, another analyst, following the same process, will not deliver the same conclusions – nor would we want them to. Discourse analysis – or ‘Discourse Interpretation’ as Bell (2011b) has suggested it be called – would be made stronger through such an acknowledgement.

This paper argues for the importance and benefits of such a shift. Following Latour’s anthropology of science, the case is made for a re-appreciation of the role of interpretation in the rigorous and systematic analysis of texts. Drawing upon insights from translation,

deconstruction, and hermeneutics, and analyzing a recent interview by the feminist, Germaine Greer, and the angry reactions it provoked from within the Trans community, I argue that CDS scholars should embrace the implications that undertaking a socio-political committed analysis brings with it. This material was chosen for three reasons: first, it reflects a three-way disagreement among groups often defended in CDS work, but rarely when they are pitted against each other (a context which brings to the fore questions of analyst norms and motivations); secondly, it concerns questions of gender identity – a pressing and political subject that has been (and is being) shaken up by the increased awareness of the Trans community; and thirdly, because it has played a prominent role in the ‘no-platforming’ debate being had across university campuses, which goes to the heart of what academic freedom means, and is a subject critical discourse analysts must concern themselves with. The analysis – and a reflection upon the analyst’s role within and influence upon that analysis – is used to illustrate the main point of the paper: that the centrality of interpretation in our work needs to be acknowledged and celebrated to a much greater degree¹.

Theoretical backgrounds and positions

Outline

My argument in this paper is that although critical discourse analysts do not deny their situatedness and consequential lack of (mythical) ‘scientific objectivity’, neither do they tend to acknowledge the implications of this stance. I begin the literature review by discussing the motivation for the development of critical linguistics, how it was conceived of as a response to a removed, and disengaged academic field that was seen as failing to engage with the political nature of language – and the role of the linguistic in politics. I argue that despite this early recognition that ideology infuses all our language thus making each of us into situated interpreters, the challenge to the ‘scientific’ status of linguistics as a discipline was not made.

Then, using insights from Latour, I discuss the myth of ‘Science’ as an objective method by which any interpretative input by the analyst-scientist is denied, and the (in Latour’s view) dangerous ‘ideal’ Science becomes conceived of as agentless, and ‘untarnished’ by the interpretive mind of a human, and the numerous translations involved in all scientific work.

Having thus challenged the validity of the powerful, yet deeply flawed, model of Science as an objective and interpretation-less pursuit, devoid of translation (translation in this paper

taken in Latour's sense, rather than in the narrower sense concerning rendering something intelligible and faithful in different spoken languages), I return to the scientificity of CDS, discussing triangulation and what it offers.

Having done so, I address the central issue of normativity in CDS, suggesting that although, as van Dijk makes clear, normative judgments are not empirical ('empirical' being generally assumed to be a requisite quality of scientific work), deconstruction offers a method whereby our normative judgments can be assessed and accessed – van Dijk and Derrida sharing the aim of making them so. I also highlight Derrida's view that it is incumbent upon the analyst to interrogate not only the make-up of the normative judgments we find deployed in the discourses we are scrutinizing, but also to interrogate our agentive role in the translation of what we find.

In the second part of the literature review, I focus in upon Allan Bell's (2011) paper in which he suggests renaming 'Discourse Analysis', 'Discourse Interpretation', and the responses to his article (principally those by Wodak, van Dijk, and Pratt) which cast light upon the discussion of scientificity, objectivity, and analyst motivation in CDS. To finish this discussion of the literature, I address the question of what responsibility we, as analysts, have if we do as I argue we ought to do, and engage more fully and openly with our roles as interpreters and translators. To support my argument, I use Lecercle's work on the agentive dimension of translation, and Joseph's concept of 'hermeneiaphobia' – the fear of interpretation.

Critical Linguistics

In 1979, Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew published *Language and Control*. In the last chapter, they make the claim that there is a need 'for a linguistics which is critical, which is aware of the assumptions on which it is based and prepared to reflect critically about the underlying causes of the phenomena it studies, and the nature of the society whose language it is' (Fowler, Hodge, Kress, & Trew, 1979, p. 186). In this, they lay the foundation on which the critical discourse analyst may, as van Dijk has done on numerous occasions, state the possibility of undertaking 'socio-politically committed scholarly research' (van Dijk, 2008, p. 7), in which 'scholars in CDS recognize and reflect about their own research commitments

and position in society' (ibid). Ten years after *Language and Control* was published, Fairclough summarised the CDS methodological defence in *Language and Power* :

The scientific investigation of social matters is perfectly compatible with committed and 'opinionated' investigators (there are no others!), and being committed does not excuse you from arguing rationally or producing evidence for your statements. (Fairclough, 1989, p. 5)

This defense was needed: the attacks were - indeed *are* - 'routine occurrences' (van Dijk, 2008, p. 7), some more vitriolic than others:

Fairclough [...] in common with his critical colleagues, sets out to expose how language is exploited in the covert insinuation of ideological influence. But they do this by the careful selection and partial interpretations of whatever linguistic features suit their own ideological position and disregarding the rest. (Widdowson, 1998, p. 146)

What seems to be at stake here is the legitimacy of a discipline - a discipline that calls itself a scienceⁱⁱ, or at least scientificⁱⁱⁱ - which admits into its ranks subjectivity and interpretation. A non-neutral analyst, politically committed, and, moreover, personally situated, is going to look at a text which is itself the product of a subject situated historically, socially, politically and institutionally: of what *scientific* value is such an interpretative analysis? Fowler *et al* did not overlook this 'problem', writing further:

The linguistic analyses in this book differ from conventional linguistics and sociolinguistics in taking as their subjects real, socially situated and usually complete texts [...] The texts are not appropriated as sources of data, but are treated as independent subjects for critical *interpretation*. (Fowler et al., 1979, p. 195)

This critical interpretation has the motive of 'unveiling', of enabling a 'demystification' (Fowler et al., 1979, p. 196), the value of which is to offer up 'a critique of the structures and goals of a society which has impregnated its language with social meanings many of which we regard as negative, dehumanizing and restrictive in their effects' (ibid).

And yet, in the very nascence of a critical linguistics - that disciplinary turn which would evolve rapidly into the multidisciplinary Critical Discourse Studies that we have today - is contained the germ of the problem. The germ is this: that despite recognising the place of interpretation, and despite recognising the situatedness of each of us analysts, the claim of legitimacy for our unique, informed, individual, situated analyses is not made. At the final hurdle, when there needed to be made a statement declaring the scientific value of a partially

subjective analysis, there was none. Informed, balanced, systematic and rigorous were necessary, but insufficient, qualities for a label of ‘scientific’. So all the features which apply equally to the *analyst* as to the *analysed* – being situated, influenced by their attitudes, ideologies, habitus – were recognised fully in regards to the text to be studied (in lexical, semantic, stylistic, structural and genre choices, implicit ideologies were ‘unveiled’), but were more or less brushed under the carpet when it came to the analyst-produced analysis. That is to say that the unique landscape between *a* situated-analyst and *their* situated-analysed is overlooked. This, perhaps, was necessary: linguistics was partially aligned to the Social Sciences, and partially to the Arts. Fowler *et al* attempt to maintain a distance between the sort of interpretation which may be valued in the Literature Department, and the interpretation they are advocating. ‘Critical analysis’, they write, ‘should also be practical analysis. The critic ought not to be content just to display his own virtuosity (which is the case with most of what passes for *literary* criticism) but ought to be committed to making a technique of analysis available to other would-be practitioners; if the critic does not attempt this, his sincerity must be doubted’ (pp. 196-197). This technique involves, they state, three assumptions: the first is that the three functions – the ‘ideational’, ‘interpersonal’ and ‘textual’ – of Halliday’s functional linguistics hold; the second asserts that participants in discourse (that is, the discourse to be studied, the *object* of study) make systematic choices based on their communicational purposes and ‘the social contingencies’ (p. 197); and the third assumption:

states that the meanings are carried and expressed in the syntactic forms and processes, that is, that the analyst can ‘read off’ meaning from the syntax. (ibid)

It is almost as if the analyst’s interpretative role has been reduced to an instrumental one: a ‘good’ analyst is like a sensitive instrumental needle; they will pick up all the meanings to be ‘had’ and convey them directly - unlike the speakers whose discourse is under investigation who ‘may act in confusion or with complex and even contradictory purposes’ (ibid).

Latour and the rehabilitation of translation

To be a good social scientist, the analyst must be a straight, smooth, sterile, and inert conduit through which the ‘truth’ can travel, untouched by social factors. This purifying removal of all signs of agency is the mark of ‘the ‘sanctioned’ sciences’ which ‘become

scientific only because they tear themselves away from all context, from all traces of contamination by history, from any naive perception, and escape even their own past.’ (Latour, 2010, p. 92). Critical linguistics is unusual insofar as it admits the impossibility of this scientific neutrality, although, simultaneously, attempting to fit within the unchallenged scientific paradigm. It is a perfect example of what Latour terms a ‘hybrid’ - the profusion and denial of which he has discussed in *We Have Never Been Modern* (1993). ‘Scientific’, almost by definition, meant ‘objective’; ‘objective’ meant ‘neutral’, and ‘neutral’ meant unsullied by human interpretation. There was an implied paradox in calling critical linguistics ‘scientific’ for just this reason, an accusation which, by extension, threatened the scientific status of linguistics as a whole. Crystal, writing in 1971 about the disputed status of linguistics as a science (but for him the disjuncture was caused not by critical linguistics, but by Chomsky’s theory – see footnote i) makes the following remark:

A new definition of science established by a field of inquiry purely for itself will inevitably incur the disapproval of other scientific disciplines, particularly of the philosophers of science: it will, indeed, be considered arrogant. But more important than this, a philosophical divergence of the kind involved [...] is going to make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for linguistic information to be ultimately integrated within the general framework of scientific knowledge. (Crystal, 1971, p. 109)

The compromise reached, by which critical discourse analysts could recognise in their data what they could not (openly) recognise and address in themselves as analysts, has allowed them to leave unperturbed the scientific doxa under which we (‘Moderns’ in Latour’s terms) exist, yet has also left them open to accusations of being non-scientific and hypocritical.

By turning his anthropologist’s eye upon our own culture, Latour has laid bare the interpretative work which lies at the heart, not only of the arts, but also of the sciences. Science is work. ‘Distortion; transformation; recoding; modeling; translating: each of these radical mediations is necessary to produce reliable and accurate information’ (Latour, 2010, p. 111). Latour has adopted the term ‘double-click’ for the fallacious belief that Science could be, ought to be, and in its proper incarnation *is*, removed from all interpretation. This, he cautions, is disastrous not only for our state of knowledge, but also for our future. Of ‘double-click’ he writes:

this Evil Genius is going to whisper in your ear that it would surely be preferable to benefit from free, indisputable, and immediate access to pure, *untransformed* information. Now, if by bad luck this ideal of total freedom from costs served as the standard for judging between truth and falsity, then everything would become untruthful, including the sciences. [...] If you make the absence of any mediation, leap, or hiatus pass the one and only test of truth, then everyone, scientists, engineers, priests, sages, artists, businessmen, cooks, not to mention politicians, judges, or moralists, you all become manipulators and cheaters, because your hands are dirtied by the operations you have carried out [...] (Latour, 2013, pp. 93-94)

And what do we do, as analysts? What are *our* operations?

Triangulation and checks-and-balances

The term ‘triangulation’ is used in a number of ways in CDS, all of which offer certain checks-and-balances: holding in check an analyst’s propensity to allow their subjective view to skew their analysis, and helping to balance inputs from theory and data. Triangulation implies a cross-referencing between independent entities and can apply intra- or inter- textually, within a single data-set or comparatively, performed by one analyst or by a number, using one method or a number of methods. The idea being to identify a number of independently reached, but comparable points, from which a convergence of views can be discovered – or not. To counter accusations of ‘cherry-picking’ – the less confrontational term used to sum up objections such as Widdowson’s – triangulation is used to introduce multiple perspectives and (usually) to demonstrate that they converge. To provide analysis-internal consistency, for example, the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) advocates constant self-reflexive shifting between four layers of analysis: i) the text-internal co-text, ii) the inter-textual level as existing, for example, between genres, texts, or discourses, iii) the extra-linguistic ‘context of situation’, and iv) the macro-level social, political and historical contexts informing the philosophical, political and cultural backdrop to the study. Another method of triangulation is the deployment of different methods of analysis, e.g. close textual analysis with a corpus-analytic approach (Baker and Levon 2015), and yet another is the multiple-analyst approach whereby more than one analyst analyses the same data-set and after this is done, the results are discussed, differences in findings addressed, and combined conclusions drawn. In their paper, ‘If on a Winter’s Night Two Researchers... A Challenge to Assumptions of Soundness of Interpretation’, Marchi and Taylor (2009), after arguing that

triangulation results can be either convergent, divergent, or complementary, conclude by encouraging the creative potential offered by triangulation:

As Jick (1979) noted early in the career of triangulation, it seems to demand imaginativeness from researchers, and should not only be about fine-tuning instruments but also stimulating creative research. However, we would also caution that the implementation of triangulation within a research study in no way guarantees greater validity, nor can it be used to make claims for “scientific” neutrality (and perhaps, in the social sciences, we would add, not *should* it [sic]). (Marchi & Taylor, 2009, p. 18)

In CDS, the qualities of consistency, rigour, systematicity, and transparency of method are prioritised but, as Meyer and Wodak (2009, p. 31) note, ‘rigorous ‘objectivity’ cannot be reached by means of discourse analysis, for each ‘technology’ of research must itself be examined as potentially embedding the beliefs and ideologies of the analysts and therefore guiding the analysis towards the analysts’ preconceptions’.

Questions of normativity

Although not frequently discussed, the normativity inherent in CDS has been recognised:

One of the tasks of CDS is to formulate the norms that define such ‘discursive injustice’. [...] Such a research policy presupposes an *ethical* assessment, implying that discourses as social interaction may be *illegitimate* according to some fundamental *norms*, for instance, those of international human and social rights. (van Dijk, 2009, p. 63)

The recognition that normative judgements lie at the base of CDS – are, in fact, *required* for the purposes of setting oneself against domination of various kinds – is possibly not given as often as it ought to be. That said, it is equally important not to lose sight of the fact that the motivation for developing CDS came from a desire to challenge the normative discourses which were – and are – contributing to the creation, perpetuation, and justification of attitudes and positions which have a negative impact upon, and (arguably!) damage, society. Herzog (2016) has recently engaged with this issue in some depth, arguing the case for immanent critique (as opposed to external critique which is what describes van Dijk’s position, or internal critique which is more or less the triangulatory method used by the DHA, with particular attention paid to inconsistencies and anomalies of argument). Immanent

critique seems to use the discrepancy between (culturally specific) norms and reality to ground judgment (a move which takes the DHA triangulation method and applies it on a cultural level). Fairclough too has engaged with questions of normativity and critique (Fairclough, 2015, pp. 12-13), and the role of analyst interpretation, although, resting his case on shared ‘members’ resources’, backgrounds the individual element of interpretation^{iv}.

In CDS then, triangulation attempts to limit the impact of an individual analyst’s bias insofar as that bias is seen to undermine or threaten the objectivity of analysis. The recognition of normativity, on the other hand, is an acknowledgement of an ethical and moral bias (the implication from van Dijk being that these norms are consciously selected) with various forms of critique being used to legitimate and – again – remove the subjective nature of analyst bias^v.

Universal rights and normative decisions

In an interview as part of the ‘Oxford Amnesty Series of Lectures’ (Derrida, 1996), Alan Montefiore asked Derrida to explain what he takes ‘to be the deconstruction of the subject, or what you take it to amount to, and why you see this not, in fact, as a threat, but rather, indeed, as a move towards strengthening our appreciation of the importance of protecting human freedom’. Derrida’s response aligns – and answers to – van Dijk’s point about normativity. Derrida is arguing against the accusation that the ‘deconstruction of the subject’ amounts to the ‘dissolution of the subject’. He says:

[D]econstructing the subject – if there is such a thing – means first to analyze historically, in a genealogical way, the formation, the different layers which have built, so to speak; every concept has its own history, and the concept of subject has a very, very long, heavy, and complex history. (Derrida & Montefiore, 2001, pp. 177-178)

Derrida and deconstruction have not been – as have Foucault and Critical theory – mainstays of CDS. But the manner by which Derrida problematizes not only the (normative) foundational concepts upon which CDS is based, but also the very process of taking, as an analyst, a subject as object of study, indicates, in my opinion, that a reappraisal of his (lack of a) role is overdue. He continues in his answer thus:

If there are human rights, which means universally valid human rights, they should be accessible, understandable to everyone, whatever language they understand or they speak.

Now, if you try to make the word subject understandable in the culture in which the philosophical (Greek, German, Latin, French) tradition is not familiar, then the word doesn't mean anything. Therefore, the first thing you have to do is a universal translation of what the subject is. So, deconstruction of the subject is first, among other things, the genealogical analysis of the trajectory through which the concept has been built, used, legitimised, and so on and so forth. (p. 178)

This insistence on the importance of translation is also one which chimes with van Dijk's insistence on making the work done in CDS accessible, not only practically (free to access if possible), but linguistically, avoiding 'an esoteric style' (van Dijk, 2009, p. 63). That esoteric style is one he associates elsewhere with people like Derrida (van Dijk, 2011, p. 611) and although Derrida's (normal) opacity comes at a cost, it also has the benefit of foregrounding the process involved in academic writing (in a manner similar to Latour's exposing the 'work' of the scientist in the lab). The unveiling of all the translating and interpreting work necessary to address a problem, as to understand it, is what Derrida highlights with direct reference to human rights here:

[W]hen you deconstruct the subject, you analyze all the hidden assumptions which are implied in the philosophical, or the ethical, or the juridical, or the political use of the concept of "subject". As you know, what we call human rights is a set of concepts, laws, requirements which were not given in nature, from the beginning. (Derrida & Montefiore, 2001, p. 179)

Here, then, we see the very make-up of the ethical position with which CDS associates itself held up to scrutiny and revealed as being – as van Dijk acknowledges also – not static, but changing and evolving, and always displaying multiple tones of meaning. Our role as CDS analysts is larger (by which I mean more potent) than we often take it to be: we choose the norms (by default if not by choice) by which we judge what or who dominates, and we enact, strengthen and perpetuate norms too in the assumptions we make as producers of academic output – particularly when we assume the role of objective social scientists.

Bourdieu, another scholar whose work has yet to be taken up fully into CDS (c.f. Forchtner and Schneickhert, 2016) explicates the connection between the adoption of a scientific role, and the increase in symbolic power that follows. He writes:

The scientific field is an armed struggle among adversaries who possess weapons whose power and effectiveness rises with the scientific capital collectively accumulated in and by the field [...] But the specificity of the scientific field stems from the fact that the competitors

agree on the principles of verification of conformity to the ‘real’, common methods for validating theses and hypotheses, in short, on the tacit contract, inseparably political and cognitive, which founds and governs the *work of objectification*. (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 113)

The (scientific) work of analysts

An issue of *Discourse Studies* (13(5): 2011) containing a focus article by Bell – ‘Re-constructing Babel: Discourse analysis, hermeneutics and the Interpretive Arc’ – and nine responses to it, offers an insight into the subject of what those involved in critical discourse studies believe they themselves do, ought to do, and are partially defined by doing. Bell’s lead paper draws upon the work of Ricoeur (particularly his Interpretive Arc) to question ‘the aptness of ‘discourse analysis’ as a label for our field’ (Bell, 2011b, p. 519), preferring that of ‘Discourse Interpretation’ on the grounds that it is ‘less reductionist’ (ibid) and more accurate^{vi}. The four responses upon which I focus come from three different disciplines: Pellauer from philosophy, Pratt from literary hermeneutics, and van Dijk and Wodak both from critical discourse studies (from the cognitive, and discourse historical sub-areas respectively).

First, however, I would like to quote from another response to the paper, this time from the discipline of history. Gardner starts his response with the following reflection:

The history of academic neologisms tells us that the primary impact of Allan Bell’s thoughtful essay is unlikely to result in a lasting change in field nomenclature. This is unsurprising. Scholarly identities are deeply implicated in the names by which we have been accustomed publicly to announce ourselves and our interests. (Gardner, 2011, p. 575)

This goes back to the earlier point made about the line consciously drawn between literary interpretation and critical discourse analysis: hybrids abound beneath the radar not only because, as Latour has pointed out, the Modern’s conception of societal progress demands (an impossible) purification, but also because delineated identities are tied up with symbolic power, in academia as in life (the binary Arts vs. Sciences, analysis vs. interpretation, but also the defining ‘History’, ‘Linguistics’, ‘Literature’, etc). The ‘residual force’ (ibid) of an established status also commands funding, and the ‘Social Sciences’ have worked hard to be in the position of having access to some of the ‘hard’, as well as the ‘soft’ funding pools. Pellauer, as a philosopher, asks the following:

If the goal is to introduce a fundamental shift in how the discipline of discourse studies constitutes itself through an acknowledgement of how interpretation functions within it, would it not be necessary to define the field as in fact a subdiscipline of hermeneutics and to show how discourse studies can be integrated into a philosophical hermeneutics? (Pellauer, 2011, p. 584)

In many of the responses to Bell's article, the implication that an acknowledgement of the role of interpretation would necessitate a re-classification, a re-centring, of discourse analysis is discussed – with a degree of anxiety. Pellauer, in discussing what an interpretative 'turn' would mean for Discourse Studies, draws upon the 'classic model that any discipline is constituted by having three things: an object of study, a method, and a goal or purpose' (Pellauer, 2011, p. 585). He notes that Bell only addresses the second of these three points, failing to adequately define 'discourse', and noting a rather vague goal of 'increased understanding' (ibid). Against this goal of 'understanding', Pellauer summarises two common criticisms: i) that it is too 'mysterious' a term, 'one lacking precision and clarity, unlike explanation which seems to best characterize the natural sciences and still holds the floor ever since the logical positivists tried to give it a clear logical form' (ibid); and ii) that it is 'too psychological, which usually means something merely subjective where objectivity is the real desideratum'.

This binary, subjective/objective, as well as the attributes of 'precision', 'clarity', and 'logical form', are crucial elements in this discussion and are taken up in the responses of both van Dijk and Wodak. Wodak takes time to distinguish between different theories of hermeneutics, identifying both 'objective' and 'critical' hermeneutics as distinct from a 'classic' hermeneutics. She aligns CDS with critical hermeneutics (largely derived from the work of Habermas) by, first, addressing the goal: to 'demystify power relations and make these visible' (Wodak, 2011, p. 626). This is not as open-ended (nor as 'fuzzy') as 'understanding'. Wodak explicates the critical approach by stressing the importance of the 'methodological trichotomy' proposed by Apel, which makes necessary the triadic structure: 'when analyzing, we attempt to understand, explain and criticize communicative actions' (2011, p. 627). Moreover, she adds, 'we should certainly remain self-reflective in our research' (ibid). This self-reflexivity lies at the crux of the matter. Yes, we can develop 'systematic', 'retroductable', 'rigorous', 'explicit', and 'transparent' methods by which we undertake 'empirical investigation', but, at the end of the day, we must *interpret* the 'results'

in order to make sense of them. (We must also put an interpretation of what is and is not relevant into the processes we use to garner ‘results’.)

We are one of the ‘filters’ through which the questions pass and the ‘results’ come, and each of us is uniquely situated – indeed, embodied – in culture, in time, in place, in history, as well as in our ever-evolving personal narratives. And we are agentive ‘filters’ as shall be discussed with reference to Pratt, below. Wodak makes the important point that ‘spatial and temporal relationships between texts always include relations of *recontextualisation*, whereby texts (and the discourses, genres and arguments which they deploy) move between spatially and temporally different contexts, and are subject to transformations whose nature depends upon the relationships and differences between such contexts’ (2011, p. 629). She says this whilst outlining the Discourse Historical Approach to discourse analysis of which she has been a pioneer, in which, to study a text, we must be aware of its past, and the past of the elements from which it is formed; ‘we can trace the specific context-dependency and discourse-historical trajectory of recontextualised elements’ (ibid). My argument is that CDS would be strengthened if the attention paid to identifying the influences which have shaped the texts we study, was – to a greater extent than is presently the case – paid to ourselves and the influences which shape our interpretation of the texts – or our ‘reading’ of our results (which amounts to the same thing). The self-reflection Wodak also sees as necessary in CDS ought to be drawn attention to – be made explicit, and be made available to the reader. Although I regret the fact that the interpretative leap is assigned to a caveat by Wodak, I am heartened to find it mentioned at all: ‘every explicit and systematic analysis of a text or discourse will always entail an interpretive ‘leap’ when reconciling the analyses of the text and context. Nevertheless, such an interpretation should remain retroductable and transparent’ (2011, p. 630).

Van Dijk starts his response article with the following statement:

It is not my habit to talk about my academic development in my scholarly articles, but on this occasion a brief personal account of some of my early research experiences may be useful to better understand my comments [...] (2011, p. 609)

Yes, I wholly agree. But why would this be so exceptional? Has not van Dijk’s academic development shaped his academic input throughout his career? Has not his *habitus* shaped his outlook, as well as his actions, as an agent, to alter, reject, or embrace those influences which he has identified as relevant to him and his work. I, for one, found van Dijk’s biographical

details interesting not merely in light of what he subsequently writes, but in light of what I know of his previous work. In all this, one thing becomes clear, and in Bell's response to the responses to his article (appropriately enough!), he says the following: '[W]riting about discourse analysis or hermeneutics is an irreducibly reflexive business, a meta-discourse about the nature of discourse. The texts we write are subject to the very issues and processes we are describing' (Bell, 2011a, p. 646). Drawing out the features which he feels are missing in Bell's (and Ricouer's) interpretive method, van Dijk highlights many of the aspects discussed by Wodak (e.g. systematicity, explicitness). He also introduces the notion that critical discourse analysis is, by its very nature, 'more democratic' in that it 'develop[s] systematic methods of analysis that can be taught and learned by students' (2011, p. 620). This is a very important point, and goes to the heart of the CDS as a 'social movement of sociopolitically committed discourse analysts'. Van Dijk, whilst recognizing the brilliance and beauty of different interpretative works, stresses that CDS is 'more descriptive and explanatory than normative. It does not tell readers how they *should* understand a text, but rather studies how different types of readers actually do so in different contexts' (2011, p. 612). And yet, when paired with the following, there seems to me to be an omission: alongside 'hearer' and 'reader', should be 'author'; and alongside 'recipients' should be 'producers' :

Yet obviously a (same) discourse is quite differently understood whether the hearer or the reader is progressive or conservative, a racist or an anti-racist, a feminist or a male chauvinist, a socialist or a neoliberal. Hence semantic models are also influenced by the underlying ideologies of the recipients. (2011, p. 613)

To equip the student in the most democratic way possible, it would surely be better to declare one's interest as an analyst and, to the extent both possible and deemed necessary, furnish our students, our readers, our audience, with some information about *us*. For just as the reader's semantic model is influenced by their ideological standpoint, so the analyst's semantic model is influenced by their own ideological standpoint.

This is not a simple exercise in divulging relevant biographic information about oneself; it is far more complex an issue. First, what *we* think relevant about ourselves may not be what a reader would find most enlightening, and how that difference is to be resolved is not clear. Secondly, the distinction between a professional and a personal persona may be desirable for a number of entirely valid reasons, and the select disclosure of information about what makes

us tick may conflict with those. Finally, our identities are not fixed, but rather fluid and multi-faceted: we construct ourselves as well as being constructed by our past experiences, and in our work we may wish to take a stance (Jaffe, 2009) at odds with our ‘true’ selves – if we even feel that one of those exists. The solution to this quandary may be the following: we choose what to present of ourselves, and do so, making explicit what will aid the reader in situating us where we wish to be situated, and if that is not anywhere more specific than the ‘academic we’, we draw the attention of our readers to this omission, and to the implications of our decision to leave certain aspects opaque, as opposed to transparent – transparency being the main characteristic differentiating the democratic approach CDS scholars aim to embody, and the opaque (yet stylistically brilliant) approach of those like Derrida (also Nancy, Cixous). We could also make more use of the position of Devil’s advocate, and challenge our best arguments with counter ones, bringing to the fore the weaknesses and limitations (but also thus the strengths) of our work.

Pratt’s response to Bell is unique in the sense that she writes as ‘a scholar who came to discourse analysis from the world of literary exegesis’ (Pratt, 2011, p. 589), therefore travelling in the other direction from Bell. She asks what a hermeneutical approach offers discourse analysis and answers that it ‘*enlivens* the relation between discourse analysts and the materials they study’ (2011, p. 590). Hermeneutics enables a fresh ‘ownership’ (ibid) of the text, full of new possibilities and enabling us to transcend ideology. Within this classic hermeneutics, however she sees a gap:

A key ingredient must be added to this script, however: desire. The interpreter is brought before the text by a desire, or a motivation, if you prefer. The desire may be just to find what this text says or does. But why *this* text? *This* genre? (ibid)

A disclosure of desire is perhaps the most important step necessary to bridge the gap between the analyst and the audience, to making manifest the interpretive agent that is I. To reflect upon one’s desire is also to look into our motivations and these, in turn, help an audience place us deictically in relation to themselves. Pratt is right in seeing that for discourse analysis particularly, this is important. She writes:

The interpreter is always looking for something, even if s/he has no idea what the something is. Ricoeur, or Bell, might want to say that the something is meaning itself, but this is not enough. The point is quite important with reference to discourse analysis, because usually the analyst’s desire is to reconfirm what is ‘known’: that prejudice exists, that advertising

manipulates, that newspapers lie, s/he will create (select or construct) a corpus that facilitates such a reading. (ibid)

One way to counter this most common of criticisms leveled against CDS – that it is an ideologically biased exercise in finding what one wishes to find – is to embrace the role of interpretation. One can present one's socio-political agenda – the exposure and critiquing of discourses of domination in society – and then rigorously, systematically, and explicitly apply the method that you have made democratically available for all to employ. If we, as critical discourse analysts, challenge the role the neo-liberal financial system plays in our universities, we, as politically committed social scientists, must invite those who disagree to use the same method to argue *their* case. This 'uncoupling' of CDS from the discourse analytical methods those who identify with it have developed, allows the marketplace of ideas and arguments to thrive. It is also more honest, in being more frank about the role subjectivity plays.

Interpretation and responsibility

Lecercle, in talking about translation, repeatedly alerts us to our active interpretive role which necessarily alters the text about which we write (or speak):

We interpret the text by translating it into another language, usually a theoretical language, drawing inferences from hints which our reading selects in the text. There is more to this than the opening of a tin. (Lecercle, 1999, p. 6)

In CDS there is an awareness that much lies between the lines; that ideology infuses language and that when we analyse a person's language use and language choices, we need to attempt to understand the context – whether that be through an exploration of mental models (van Dijk), or historical discourse (Wodak). *We* could be those we study; we should treat our own language use as necessitating as complex an analysis as we grant others 'under the microscope'. This is exactly the point Latour has been emphatic about: scientific 'objectivity' is not equal to 'double-click', or ought not to be.

There is, in CDS, an awareness that the adoption of a 'neutral/scientific' stance is as ideological as any other. However, for analysts – and, no doubt – their readers, there is the easy 'fallback' position of the scientist as detached and omnipotent commentator. Theo Hermans, in looking at translation in systems (from a point of view which sees all acts of

interpretation as translations of some kind), focuses upon the responsibility inherent in interpretation:

The habitus concept stresses not only the structured but equally the structuring character of the ‘habitual’ practice of translating. Just as following a norm reinforces that norm, submissive translators play into the hands of custom and order. The reverse side of this coin is that translators can govern norms as much as they are governed by them. (Hermans, 1999, p. 134)

The symbolic capital and norm-reinforcement of a scientific translation is strengthened when it is paired with the ‘disinterested’ academic stance. CDS scholars share a commitment to challenge domination where it is found – and discourses of domination are often similarly characterized by custom and order. The guise of unmediated scientific enquiry – double-click – even if it is enquiry *into* discourses of domination, places the analyst within a normative discourse, which itself, I would argue, dominates by laying claims to a chimerical objectivity. In highlighting the norm-altering power a translation wields, Hermans mentions Venuti’s ‘self-conscious, resistant translation’ (ibid). Despite agreeing with van Dijk that the hermeneutics of Derrida (and other, as he puts it ‘(invariably male) Great Masters’ (2011, p. 611)) is undemocratic in its opacity of method, what *can* be said of Derrida’s work is that it forces the reader to engage with the struggles of the author, as well as engage with the subject matter with which the author is grappling. Simeoni, a translation-scholar who worked to incorporate and develop Bourdieu’s ideas, is also mentioned by Hermans:

Simeoni discerns several possibilities for empirical translation research using the habitus concept. We could gain insight into the ‘sociogenesis’ of translating practices by focusing on the cultural group in which a translator received his or her training, and tracing the inculcation of a specialized habitus. (1999, p. 135)

One such specialized habitus is that of linguists, who have laid claim to their corner of the domain of truth – an inheritance, Joseph notes, the roots of which were planted at a time when:

[E]nquiry into language was not about the “trivial” matter of how ordinary people get across their desires and opinions to one another. It was instead about knowledge – something divine that is transmitted into the minds of human beings [...] The desire for a *true* understanding links up with the search for an authoritative way of determining right and wrong in the interpretation of texts. (Joseph, 2010, p. 104)

Interpretation as a threat, and something to be feared, has led to what Joseph terms ‘hermeneiaphobia’, a disorder that has led Linguistics to go to ‘extraordinary lengths to exclude or mechanise interpretation’ (ibid). The prognosis:

Any project for an “inventive” linguistics must outgrow this primordial hermeneiaphobia and embrace the *human* dimensions of language, which are all about how we interpret texts and utterances, always individually, sometimes inventively; and how we interpret each other linguistically. (ibid)

For CDS to embrace such a project would involve turning our attention to ourselves (as well as to the discourses we wish to study), in much the same way as Latour has done for several groups (scientists, lawyers, theologians, etc.). The call for the critical discourse analysis of CDS *has* been made more frequently in the last few years (Billig, 2008; Cameron, 2001; Cameron & Panović, 2014; Chilton, 2005; Krzyżanowski, 2011; Shi-Xu, 2012), and this paper is part of that effort.

Analysis

Van Dijk writes the following: ‘CDS scholars are typically interested in the way discourse (re)produces social *domination*, that is, the *power abuse* of one group over others, and how dominated groups may discursively *resist* such abuse’ (2009, p. 63). Racism, sexism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, homophobia: different types of discrimination have been tackled in a wide variety of discourses, in numerous genres. More often than not, the discourses studied are complex in structure but (presented as) less complex in terms of whether they do, in fact, embody an abuse of power against a dominated group. For the purposes of this paper, however, I want to analyse a text which is less easy to categorise, and yet is clearly seen to be discriminatory, taken as anti-transgender, anti-free speech, and misogynist. Women, transsexuals, and those fighting for freedom of expression of thought, are three groups that CDS scholars would typically hope to support in their struggle for equality and freedom of expression. What happens, however, when these groups come into conflict, not with the ‘usual suspects’ – people whose discourses are (presented as), for example, racist, neo-capitalist, homophobic – but with each other? In such a case, the question of interpretation, and accepted – and desired – norms, comes to the fore more clearly than is often the case. Studying such a situation brings to the analyst’s – *our* – *my* - attention

not only their own role in and responsibility for the interpretation they produce, but also the norms which underlie their own and their subjects' judgments and are privileged within them.

Germaine Greer (GG) is a well-known feminist scholar who recently (re)entered the news by voicing her opinion, in an interview on the BBC's *Newsnight*, that male → female transgender people could never be women:

GG I'm not saying that people should not be allowed to go through that procedure. What I'm saying is it doesn't make them a woman. It happens to be an opinion. It's not a prohibition. Carry on if ...if that's what you think it is you want to do. (Benson, 2015)

In a later interview, discussing the controversy which her earlier comments had caused, she said:

Just because you lop off your dick and then wear a dress, doesn't make you a fucking woman. I've asked my doctor to give me long ears and liver spots and I'm going to wear a brown coat but that won't turn me into a fucking cocker spaniel. (Root & Greer, 2015)

These comments, and others like them, caused great offence to many in the transgender community, one of whom, Rebecca Root, a transgender actress, was asked by Victoria Derbyshire (host of her eponymous TV show), concerning the comments: 'are they as offensive as some of the worst racist comments that one might hear, or some of the worst sexist comments that one might hear?' (ibid) to which she replied:

Yes, yes, they are. You ask any trans person, trans male or trans female and they will tell you that what she has said is grossly offensive. (ibid)

The first contestation, then, is whether Greer's comments are discriminatory by being so insulting as to be transphobic. In her *Newsnight* interview, the presenter, Kirsty Wark (KW), asked the following:

KW But for those who do not feel it's been a disaster and feel more comfortable then do you understand that they might feel that you are being hurtful to them?

GG (SHAKES HEAD) People are hurtful to me all the time. Try being an old woman! For goodness sake – people get hurt all the time. I'm not about to walk on eggshells.

Going back to Root's interview, when prompted further by Derbyshire: 'So when she [Greer] says 'it's just my opinion, I don't care'?', Root continues:

Well, you know, people have opinions about race and the Holocaust denials and they're not given a platform and those opinions are, you know, insane really. (Root & Greer, 2015)

Here enters the second contestation: that Greer's comments are equivalent to other speech acts which are liable to fall under the classification of Hate Speech^{vii}, and their speaker ought not to be given a platform from which to voice them. Note, however, that Root describes these opinions not in terms of being illegal, but in terms of being insane (both illegality and insanity being grounds whereby an opinion may be disregarded and delegitimized). Greer, for her part, emphatically declared: 'I've been accused of inciting violence against transsexual people – that's absolute nonsense'^{viii} (Benson, 2015).

Payton Quinn, however, (identified by the *Huffington Post* as a 'stand-up comedian, trans feminist activist and all round ethereal being') argued the following:

The response I have heard most often by far, from those opposing and allies alike, is that no-platforming Germaine Greer is somehow infringing on her freedom of speech and that a debate or a protest would be a better option.

I can understand how someone who refuses to acknowledge transphobia as an issue or has a lack of understanding of freedom of expression laws in the UK can come to this conclusion but hopefully I'll be able to clear that up for you. (Quinn, 2015)

Quinn goes on to name Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, 'included in the Human Rights Act 1998', and, recognizing also that the 'right to freedom of expression is also a fundamental common law right', argues the following:

Although there is no universally accepted definition, hate speech is generally understood to describe forms of expression which incite violence, hatred or discrimination against other persons and groups, particularly by reference to, among other things, their gender. [...] The European Court of Human Rights themselves have said on the matter: "It may be considered necessary in certain democratic societies to sanction or even prevent all forms of expression which spread, incite or justify hatred based on intolerance." (ibid)

Still, Quinn holds back from suggesting that Greer ought to be taken to court, continuing the argument instead with the following:

In Cardiff University's own policy statement regarding trans equality it states that they are "committed to providing an environment that promotes equality and eliminates discrimination for trans students and staff"; this includes the elimination of materials that "rely on or

reinforce stereotypical assumptions about trans people" or contains "transphobic material". On those grounds alone, it would be fair to say that Germaine Greer's appearance at a university event is against their own policy on trans equality. (ibid)

Another well-known cultural figure in the U.K., the author Julian Barnes, entered the debate (or at least the headline for the article in *The Telegraph* was 'British writer Julian Barnes defends Germaine Greer's controversial transgender comments') insofar as he is quoted as saying of Greer's opinion: "That is a perfectly legitimate point of view, seems to me" (Clarke-Billings, 2016). *If* I presented the debate solely in such a way, one would be forgiven for imagining that there were splits along the demographic lines of age (Greer and Barnes, 76 and 70 respectively) and/or 'cis' or 'trans' identity ('cis' designating people whose born sexual identity matched at birth their gender identity). If I, Rowan R. Mackay, was simultaneously assumed by you to be a white male ('Mackay' sounding rather Western, and potentially rather 'white', and 'Rowan' being more often a male name than a female one), would you, my readers, not read into my argument different things than you would if you thought I was a trans M→F individual? And what if you (believed that you) knew that I was a cis-gendered, middle-aged, female? Following Pratt's point: what is my desire in this study? Why *this* debate? Why *this* subject for discussion? It is not the habit of analysts to address these points in their published work. But, if we recall Hermans (and the insight gained from translation studies), through the (uncritical) adoption of norms picked up in our professional habitus, perpetuating those norms may (and I have argued *do*) obfuscate the fact that we are the opinionated agents ('there are no others'!) offering individual interpretations, and being led by our own unique desires – which is not to imply that high standards regarding argumentation, methodology, relevance, and rigour should not (or cannot) be applied.

Returning to the debate: if I – as analyst – introduce the voice of Rhyannon Styles, 'Elle's trans columnist', and her opinion piece, 'A Trans Woman's Reply To Germaine Greer: 'Censoring her is not the right thing to do'', I am clearly choosing to represent the debate in a different way: I aim to give voice to the opinions of those whom I find – and, once found, find compelling. Perhaps – indeed, almost certainly – there will be a person whose voice would add a level of nuance to the debate and yet who, in this analysis, shall not be heard because I myself have not heard it. Interpretation starts with choosing what is relevant and what is sufficient. Would my analysis be lacking in value if I chose not to include a dissenting trans female voice? What impact does making the decision to include such a voice have on my analysis, my representation of the debate? In one way, it adds legitimacy to my

analysis to a degree: I am taking another relevant view into account (relevance, of course, a normative judgment). In another way, depending on how I frame Styles' contribution, I could be seen to be giving too much weight to the trans viewpoints, and not enough to the cis ones. In yet another, if I chose to give Styles a voice to showcase the weakness of the trans-female argument, I could claim to be giving free voice to an argument with which I disagreed.

Styles' piece starts thus:

Last week, the famous second wave feminist Germaine Greer made headlines when she trolled the transgender community on *Newsnight* by telling the world, trans women are 'not women' because we do not 'look like, sound like or behave like women. (*Newsnight*, 2015)

Greer, the 76-year-old Cambridge academic, did not simply voice her opinion after being asked by the BBC (that airs *Newsnight*) for an interview at her home, she 'trolled' a community. The meaning of 'troll' is not clear here, and as a relatively new phenomenon, with a massively increased use based around describing cyber-behaviour, it continues to alter. Its meaning is used – and understood – differently by people of different ages (c.f Bishop, J, 2014, 'Trolling for the Lulz? Using media theory to understand transgressive humour and other internet trolling in online communities'), ranging from being interpreted as something akin to practical joking, to extremely serious harassment and threat. As I write my analysis, which of those meanings I choose (or possibly simply assume) will influence how my argument is constructed – and *also* how it is interpreted by my readers. If, for example, I assume an understanding of 'troll' which equates to 'serious threat', I may be somewhat delegitimized (or branded out-of-date, which amounts to the same thing) by readers who take the term to mean something far more lighthearted and playful.

After describing her own transition, and the very great difficulties which went along with it (echoed by Root), Styles ends her piece:

In the days since her quote went viral, a petition to stop Greer from giving an upcoming talk at Cardiff University has been circulating. But I don't think censoring her is necessarily the best thing to do. It's not about trans women vs. cis gender women. It's about listening to each other and acknowledging our differences of opinion, because it's from these disagreements that we ultimately learn from one another. We all have a voice. And as Greer needs to recognize, there's room for all them. (ibid)

Here, then, we have support for freedom of expression (Styles also writes ‘she [Greer]’s entitled to her opinion. It doesn’t anger me, I can separate myself from her words’), an opposition to the call to ‘no-platform’ Greer, yet a refutation of Greer’s claim that a trans-female is not and cannot be a woman.

This already complicated matrix of identities, opinions, and claims to being discriminated against is made all the more complex by the third contestation: that it is misogynistic. The identity of ‘it’ here being both: i) Greer’s view that trans-females are not women, and ii) the assumption by M→ F trans people that an adoption of the cosmetic (and deeply so – including, therefore operatively altered genitalia) appearance of a woman, a woman makes. Styles’ summary of Greer’s comments is inaccurate: Greer does not, in this interview, discuss *why* M→ F transgender individuals are not and cannot be women. Knowing her argument helps: people – men (as she would put it) – who live the first part of their lives in the male patriarchy, experiencing neither the physical difficulties (menstruation), nor the societal difficulties (living as a woman in a male-dominated society), cannot become a woman. The early years’ experience understood as a mix of biological and societal factors is, for Greer, necessary – and, in fact, definitional - to being a woman. She does not say that W→ M transgender people were never women, nor that M→ F transgender people did not have a very hard time growing up as men in society, so the (for trans-people, discrepant) emotional-gender-identity does not play a role in her argument. Conversely, for the transgender community, this emotional-gender-identity – by which I mean what one feels oneself to be as opposed to either one’s sexual identity, or what one was raised as – is what truly defines one’s gender. The argument pivots on the meaning of ‘woman’. Quinn writes:

If you believe that trans women are women, as you should because they are, then what Germaine Greer is espousing in her campaign against them is misogyny and surely no feminism should include any form of misogyny. (2015)

Quinn inserts further nuance into the accusation prior to this by starting her article thus:

So, notable second-wave feminist writer and scholar Germaine Greer is transphobic (more specifically transmisogynistic). (ibid)

Greer, however, uses the example of Caitlyn Jenner to make her point about misogyny:

KW /...yes, who's been on the front of lots of magazines and apparently is – I think I'm right in saying – is getting an award for being kind of glamour woman of the year. What do you think about that?

GG I think it's misogynist. I think misogyny plays a really big part in all of this. That a man who goes to all of these lengths to be a woman will be a better woman than someone who is just born a woman. (Benson, 2015)

Not one of these people cited attempts, in the texts analysed, to deconstruct what 'woman' means and yet it appears that the argument cannot advance without such a move. Greer is adamant in her intransigence: she has spent most of her adult life arguing for liberation feminism and is not about to allow *men* into her definition of women, finding the idea that men could appropriate the space women can call their own, and judge themselves to be 'better' women, appalling. Those in the trans community, on the other hand, experience the deep irony of finding a hugely influential feminist being, in their view, misogynistic. I have elsewhere (Mackay, 2015) written about the extent to which a move for legitimacy challenges the status-quo definitions (which I termed deep legitimation), or, alternatively, argues to be included in the status-quo as it is already defined (soft legitimation). On one hand, the trans community challenges the status quo definition of what it is to be one particular gender (M/F), and therefore engages in an act of deep legitimation. On the other hand, as Greer notes in another interview:

[W]e are wedded to sex roles, we love them [...] even things like transgender, they're not fighting against a sex role, they started off with one, they started off as Ken, and then they want to become Barbie, but actually, we live in the middle, and we'd quite like our roles to be less sharply differentiated. (Cook, 2015)

In challenging the well-established M/F binary – which the trans community (here, at least) accepts – Greer is also involved in deep legitimation and her rejection of equality- as opposed to liberation- feminism is deeply challenging to the status quo.

Conclusion

Here are three groups claiming systemic, unfair societal treatment – feminists, transgender people, and those in favour of freedom of speech – all three of which align well with the community aims of CDS: to be 'sociopolitically committed to social equality and

justice [...] typically [being] interested in the way discourse (re)produces social *domination*, that is, the *power abuse* of one group over others, and how dominated groups may discursively *resist* such abuse' (van Dijk, p.63). By using this example, I hope to have foregrounded the primary and inevitable role that subjective interpretation has in CDS specifically, but in all academic work – hard Science included. Bringing together insights taken from CDS scholars' reflections on their own work, Latour, Bourdieu, and Derrida, as well as some insights from Interpretation Studies, and Hermeneutics, I have argued that recognizing the place of interpretation does not invalidate our analyses, but in fact, makes them stronger, more democratic, and ultimately, more honest. And my own desire? To challenge the practice of no-platforming people whose voices may offend but whose opinions are necessary to hear for full and open debate to occur.

References

- Baker, P., & Levon, E. (2015). Picking the right cherries? A comparison of corpus-based and qualitative analyses of news articles about masculinity. *Discourse & Communication*, 9(2), 1-16.
- Bell, A. (2011a). On responsiveness: Interfacing hermeneutics and discourse interpretation. *Discourse Studies*, 13(5), 645-653.
- Bell, A. (2011b). Re-constructing Babel: Discourse analysis, hermeneutics and the Interpretive Arc. *Discourse Studies*, 13(5), 519-568.
- Benson, O. (2015). Guest post: Transcript of Newsnight interview with Germaine Greer. Retrieved from <http://www.butterfliesandwheels.org/2015/guest-post-transcript-of-newsnight-interview-with-germaine-greer/>
- Billig, M. (2008). The language of critical discourse analysis: The case of nominalization. *Discourse & Society*, 19(6), 783-800.
- Bourdieu, P. (2000). *Pascalian Meditations* (R. Nice, Trans.). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Cameron, D. (2001). *working with Spoken Discourse*. London: Sage.
- Cameron, D., & Panović, I. (2014). *Working with Written Discourse*. London: Sage.
- Chilton, P. (2005). Missing links in mainstream CDA: Modules, blends and the critical instinct. In R. Wodak & P. Chilton (Eds.), *A new agenda in (critical) discourse analysis: Theory, methodology and interdisciplinary* (pp. 19-51). Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Clarke-Billings, L. (Producer). (2016, 12/04/16). British writer Julian Barnes defends Germaine Greer's controversial transgender comments. Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/12116578/British-writer-Julian-Barnes-defends-Germaine-Greers-controversial-transgender-comments.html>

- Cook, J. (Producer). (2015, 13/04/16). Germaine Greer on anti-feminists, transgender and how equality feminism is not enough. *thelachat*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1WFOoOGKaU>
- Crystal, D. (1971). *Linguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Derrida, J. (1996) *Oxford Amnesty Lecture/Interviewer: A. Montefiore*.
- Derrida, J., & Montefiore, A. (2001). "Talking liberties": Jacques Derrida's interview with Alan Montefiore. In G. J. J. Biesta & D. Egéa-Kuehne (Eds.), *Derrida & Education*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. London, New York: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (2015). *Language and Power* (3 ed.). London: Routledge.
- Forchtner, B., & Schneickert, C. (2016). Collective learning in social fields: Bourdieu, Habermas and critical discourse studies. *Discourse & Society*, 27(3), 293-307.
- Fowler, R., Hodge, R., Kress, G., & Trew, T. (1979). *Language and Control*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Gardner, P. (2011). Hermeneutics and history. *Discourse Studies*, 13(5), 575-581.
- Hermans, T. (1999). *Translation in Systems: Descriptive and System-oriented Approaches Explained*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Herzog, B. (2016). Discourse analysis as immanent critique: Possibilities and limits of normative critique in empirical discourse studies. *Discourse & Society*, 27(3), 278-292.
- Jaffe, A. (Ed.) (2009). *Stance: Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. Oxford: OUP.
- Joseph, J. E. (2010). Hermeneiaphobia: Why an 'Inventive' Linguistics Must First Embrace Interpretation. In S. Sorlin (Ed.), *Inventive Linguistics*: Presses universitaires de la Méditerranée.
- Krzyżanowski, M. (2011). Ethnography and Critical Discourse Analysis: Special Issue. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 8(4). Retrieved from
- Latour, B. (1993). *We Have Never Been Modern* (C. Porter, Trans.). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Latour, B. (2010). *On the Modern Cult of the Factish Gods* (C. Porter, Trans.). Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Latour, B. (2013). *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence* (C. Porter, Trans.). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Lecercle, J.-J. (1999). *Interpretation as Pragmatics*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- LSA. (2016). Linguistic Society of America. Retrieved from <http://www.linguisticsociety.org/what-linguistics>
- Mackay, R. R. (2015). Multimodal legitimation: Selling Scottish independence. *Discourse and Society*, 26(3), 323-348.
- Marchi, A., & Taylor, C. (2009). If on a Winter's Night Two Researchers... A Challenge to Assumptions of Soundness of Interpretation. *CADAAD*, 3(1), 1-20.
- Newsnight (Writer). (2015). Germaine Greer: Transgender women are 'not women'. YouTube: BBC.
- Pellauer, D. (2011). Some comments on Allan Bell's proposed turn to hermeneutics. *Discourse Studies*, 13(5), 583-587.
- Pratt, M. L. (2011). The body in the corpus. *Discourse Studies*, 13(5), 589-592.
- Public Order Act 1986, 64 (1986).
- Quinn, P. (2015). 23/10/2015. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/payton-quinn/germaine-greer_b_8366838.html
- Root, R., & Greer, G. (2015) *Germaine Greer insults transgendered people some more/Interviewer: V. Derbyshire*. Victoria Derbyshire Show, YouTube.
- Selby, J. (Producer). (2015, 13/04/16). Germaine Greer 'should not be invited back' to Cambridge University after appearing to deny the existence of transphobia. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/germaine-greer-not-invited-back-to-cambridge-university-after-appearing-to-deny-the-existence-of-10010405.html>

- Shi-Xu. (2012). Why do cultural discourse studies? Towards a culturally conscious and critical approach to human discourses. *Critical Arts*, 26(4), 484-503.
- van Dijk, T. (2008). *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive approach*. Cambridge: CUP.
- van Dijk, T. (2009). Critical Discourse Studies: A Sociocognitive Approach. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- van Dijk, T. (2011). Discourse studies and hermeneutics. *Discourse Studies*, 13(5), 609-621.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1998). The Theory and Practice of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Applied Linguistics*, 19(1), 136-151.
- Wodak, R. (2011). Complex texts: Analysing, understanding, explaining and interpreting meanings. *Discourse Studies*, 13(5), 623-633.
- Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (Eds.). (2009). *Critical Discourse Analysis: History, Agenda, Theory and Methodology* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

ⁱ I would like to thank my two reviewers for their insightful comments, which, undoubtedly, led me to attempt to improve upon an earlier draft of this paper: I hope I have succeeded. I would also like to thank John E. Joseph for discussion of - and comments made upon - this paper, as it developed.

ⁱⁱ Writing in 1971, in a chapter entitled 'Linguistic Science', Crystal explains what is meant by the three terms – *explicitness*, *systematicness*, and *objectivity* – the qualities which are 'generally agreed outside linguistics (and for many linguists too, of course)' to be necessary 'for any enterprise to qualify as scientific' (Crystal, 1971, p. 78). Note the 'outside linguistics': Crystal argues that Chomsky's proposed transformational-generative theory has challenged this received view by placing at its explanatory core a role for intuition (ibid, p.107). Crystal writes: 'The difference between the two linguistic approaches is not so much a question of their use of empirical data, as of what *other* kinds of data can also be legitimately introduced; and it is the claims which seem to be being made here which strike the outsider as being tantamount to a radical redefinition of the term 'science'' (ibid.).

ⁱⁱⁱ The masthead for the Linguistic Society of America is 'Advancing the Scientific Study of Language' (LSA, 2016), underneath which, in the section 'What is Linguistics?', we find a sub-section entitled 'The Science of Linguistics'.

^{iv} Fairclough writes the following: 'Interpretation is seen as a process which combines features of the discourse being interpreted, which constitute 'cues' for interpreters, and what I call the 'members' resources' which interpreters bring to the interpretative process and which constitute 'interpretative procedures'. In interpreting (and evaluating) discourse, critical analysts draw upon the same 'members' resources' (MR) as other discourse participants. But there is also a difference between analysts and other participants in that analysts are concerned to develop analytical procedures which make explicit how MR is drawn upon in interpretation [...]' (Fairclough, 2015, p. 10). The content and delimitation of the 'members' resources', and how it can be shown that these are (fully?) shared is unclear. Moreover, multiple membership would presumably entail multiple sets of resources which would combine, with each individual, to create a unique set; and it would be this set of resources which each individual would have access to.

^v For a recent discussion of the usefulness of Bourdieu's use of the concept of habitus, see Forchtner and Schneickert (2016).

^{vi} Bell's paper also offers, by way of illustration, a detailed hermeneutic analysis of the story of Babel which informs the responses given to his paper. I do not engage with these here.

^{vii} The *Independent* ran with the headline: 'Germaine Greer 'should not be invited back' to Cambridge University after appearing to deny the existence of transphobia', in which it was reported that: 'Greer faced similar protests ahead of her address at Cambridge Union Society this week. A counter-event was staged against what one student called Greer's "hate speech" by student activist group CUSU LGBT+'. (Selby, 2015)

^{viii} Although the issue of 'no-platforming' seems to have grown recently, the struggle pitted between the freedom of expression and freedom from abusive words has a long history. A recent manifestation is the amendment made to Section 5 of the Public Order Act, 1986, which deals with causing harassment, alarm, or distress, altered in 2014, from '(1) A person is guilty of an offence if he— (a) uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour, or disorderly behaviour, or [...]', to "(1) 'A person is guilty of an offence if he – (a) uses threatening or abusive words or behaviour, or disorderly behaviour, or [...]'". ("Public Order Act 1986," 1986)

Author Bio:

Rowan R. Mackay is a research fellow at the University of Edinburgh, working in the fields of Critical Discourse Studies, Multimodality, Social Semiotics, legitimization, and strategic change within institutions.